

Submission Cover Sheet

North East Link Project EES IAC

233

Request to be heard?: yes

Full Name: Mark Allen Clayton

Organisation: Marcellin Old Collegians Football Club

Affected property:

Attachment 1:

Attachment 2: Submission_to_N

Attachment 3:

Comments: Submission Uploaded in .docx and .pdf

Submission to North East Link Authority, from Marcellin Old Collegians Football Clubs

The Club Today

My name is Marcus Clayton, I am the president of Marcellin Old Collegians football Club, a premier club in the Victorian Amateur Football Association, and I am making this submission on behalf of ourselves, and the Marcellin Bald Eagles who play in the Metropolitan Super Rules competition in the Premier Division.

Marcellin Old Collegians Football Club (MOCFC) celebrated their 50th anniversary last year, the depth of the loyalty to the club can be gauged by the appearance of no less than 14 players from that very first Marcellin game at a lunch to mark the occasion. The sight of the very first team meeting our current senior team was a proud moment for the club. Our founder, Tim Naughton, still attends every game, and is just as passionate today as when he started the club.

The club has 2 premier teams, a thirds (club) team and an under 19 team in the men's section, and 2 premier women's teams. The Bald Eagles have 2 premier teams. The club enjoys success on the field and is rebuilding at present, the average age of our senior team at the moment being just 20, with our oldest player 25, so we are looking forward to the next decade, as our players get stronger and more skilled. There are over 200 players registered with MOCFC, and another 100 with the Bald Eagles.

Marcellin, although an all-male school, were a pioneer in Women's football in the VAFA, and from an initial 5 women core in 2016, we have developed into arguably the strongest women's team in the country, winning 2 out of the 3 premierships that have been played so far in the VAFA, and last year scooping all the individual awards, leading goal kicker, rising star and League Best and Fairest. We peaked at 84 registered women players last year.

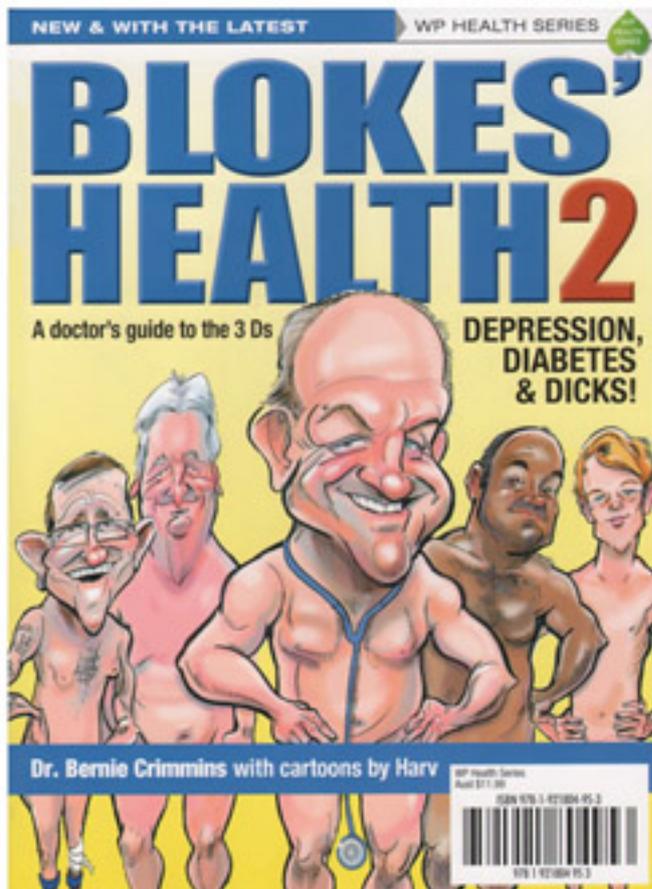
Our success in football though, is in my opinion, outweighed by the difference we have made to people's lives, the support shown to those in difficulty, and the wellbeing that is enjoyed by our community knowing that a wholly benevolent enterprise, run solely by volunteers is there to look forward to on an ongoing basis. My proudest moments as a president have been on the half dozen or so occasions when approached by a mum (usually) who has said "thanks for saving my son's or daughter's life. The story is usually that they have had a less than happy time at school, usually exacerbated at uni, are lonely, depressed and sad. Upon joining the club, they are immediately accepted, valued and feel as if they finally belong to a tribe. The club is a place where they can genuinely enjoy themselves on 3 occasions each week, and inevitably make friends that endure for a lifetime. This facility is effortless for the club, it is just a natural consequence of a happy and successful enterprise.

Another facet of the club is the effort we make to help those within our community. A while ago we learned of a young single mum (not connected directly to the club) who was struggling. A group of our tradesman players got together, the club put in some resources, and her house which required urgent repairs was fixed and renovated for her over a couple of weeks.

Earlier this year one of our players who is 22 was diagnosed with a form of cancer. His mother had suffered a stroke and was in hospital, and he was home alone. Our women

players self-organised to have someone stay with him at all times, then went further and organised a fund raiser throughout the community. Within a couple of weeks and an event that attracted more than 1000 people, we had raised more than \$60,000 that was donated to the Olivia Newton John cancer clinic in his name.

The Bald eagles are a leading light in promoting Men's Health throughout the community, Dr Bernie Crimmins is a passionate advocate and presents forums, lectures and advice throughout the community by way of the Football club and his very popular books "Blokes Health 1&2". Bernie is vice president of MOCFC and president of The Bald Eagles



MOCFC Facilities

The clubs play in 2 venues at present, on 3 ovals. Our home games are usually 2 senior men's games on the main school marquee oval, (the Bray) 2 games on the second oval, (the Lyons) and 2 games at Bulleen Park no3 oval.

We sometimes change the venues i.e. for our Women in Football day we have the women play on the Bray and the men may play at Bulleen Park.

The Bray is a premier ground, acknowledged to be the best in the VAFA, and as such it is not used for training, nor does it have lighting.

All 8 of our teams train on the Lyons oval and the adjacent Gartner Fields which are a soccer and rugby ground. Both these grounds are lit, and are used 4 nights a week, and by the Bald Eagles on a Sunday morning.

The lighting belongs to MOCFC and was installed by us on school grounds. We have a functions area with a kitchen, a canteen and a licensed bar area for social events. The club gets together on a Wednesday night for the Women and Bald Eagles, and Thursday night for the men's teams for a meal, the canteen is open on game day, and the bar opens after the final game of the day for a social function to which the opposing team is invited and inevitably attend. We also run several lunches and social events during the year at our rooms.

MOCFC 2021 Onwards

MOCFC recognises that the North East Link is an important and necessary part of the state infrastructure and welcomes the project. We are confident that the end result will benefit us all, and we will cooperate in every way possible.

However, we face some real challenges during the construction phase. MOCFC is affected by work on both sides of Bulleen road, both at Bulleen Park, and by the loss of our training venue at Marcellin.

We are reasonably confident that our game days will be manageable, as we should still have access to Bulleen Park, and to the Bray, but we have nearly no opportunity to train if the reference plan is adopted.

A Premier men's team needs a full-size oval on which to train, as we will lose nearly half of the Lyons oval that will no longer be possible.

We will lose the lighting on the Gartner field as it is mainly located at the Bulleen road end. The Gartner is suitable for some Women's and U19 training, (usually the Monday recovery session after a game) but they also need a full-size oval to train to the standard required for a Premier team.

The club recognises and accepts that we will have to move our training ground elsewhere, providing the surface, the lighting and facilities are commensurate with what we have now. Even if we move to a first-Class facility, we will face many challenges.

Losing players if the new venue is too far from Marcellin:

One of the attractions of Marcellin is the ease of access, even in the peak traffic at 5.30-6.00 Straight off the freeway if you (as many of our players are) are in the city. Struggling through the suburban peak to a ground less well situated will be a negative to some. The general but inevitable inconvenience of negotiating the construction areas will certainly not be an incentive to join or remain at MOCFC

Revenue and Costs:

A consequence of the loss of players will be a loss of revenue. The club relies on 3 main revenue streams, Sponsorship, Player subscriptions and Social events/fundraisers. Our costs are primarily registration fees, player uniforms and medical/trainer/supply costs. Our fees are team based, so will not change unless we lose a significant number of players. If we have to field fewer teams then our cost will change marginally as the 3rds and U19 teams are only a fraction of the cost of senior teams. Our insurance costs are fixed, regardless of player numbers.

The result of this is self-evident, a possible marginal change in costs, and a significant shift in revenue.

Player uniform costs will drop, but in the same proportion as subs, so the effect will be substantially neutral.

Our trainer /medical costs will remain the same, if we field the same number of teams.

We fear most that the Wednesday/Thursday night social gatherings of the players will suffer at a venue that has inadequate or uninviting facilities, after being at our own that is well equipped with a commercial style kitchen, well lit, warm and comfortable.

This is the glue that holds the club together, the spirit of the club, and it also is a steady income stream that can be relied upon throughout the season.

If the showers and rooms are not up to scratch and the venue not inviting, then the players will just get into their cars and go home to change and shower.

The club will not only lose its revenue, it will lose its soul.

MOCFC believes that the future, after construction is bright, but we have grave concerns that there is a real danger that our cashflow and player numbers will suffer to the extent that we may have no way of surviving through to our bright future.

If our training suffers there is also the danger that we are relegated from the Premier division of the VAFA which will make it more difficult to attract players and members to our club, again affecting our revenue.

The final issue is that by investing in our Women's program for 2 years, we have had to borrow money to cover costs.

We are looking forward to recouping some of the substantial costs incurred. A major sponsor will be much more difficult to find if our standards slip, and our participation falls.

Suggestions

As you can imagine MOCFC has been thinking about these matters for some time now. One suggestion is to look at putting 2 ovals on the current site of the golf driving range on Templestowe rd., adjacent to the country club.

We believe there is enough room there to accommodate our training needs, and we would be very happy to share with a junior club, as the facility could be used for junior training until 6.30, and for junior match days on Sundays.

We would be happy to take on a permanent tenancy there with a junior club, which would further relieve the pressure on Bulleen park and our need to share the no3 oval (full size one) with the YJFL as has been proposed by council.

The location is within a few minute's drive of Marcellin, access is straight forward, there appears to be room for parking, and the land is relatively flat and suitable for a sporting facility that is badly needed.

The fact is that in just the VAFA competition, since the women's competition was started 3 years ago, there are an extra 88 teams training and playing on a Saturday, and as far as I know, no new facilities to accommodate them.

Our own club has 84 female players vying for 48 places in teams, and the demand is not tailing off, so we envisage a 3rd women's team in the future.

There is an ongoing annoyance with sharing the Bulleen Park oval due to our senior football requiring different boundary line markings (due to insurance requirements) to the junior code.

This results in time and money spent in re-marking lines. This will not be an issue if we have access to the full-size ground.

Regardless, the project will go ahead, and MOCFC are open to any suggestions about moving, sharing grounds with junior clubs etc, but we ask you to bear in mind the challenges we will face, and ask you to help us manage them.

Marcus Clayton

President

Marcellin Old Collegians Football Club.

For Marcellin Old Collegians, and Marcellin Bald Eagles Football Clubs.